

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 103457 TOSEC 110413

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S E C R E T STATE 103457 TOSEC 110413

EXDIS

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ALGIERS BELGRADE BONN BRASILIA
BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN DAR ES SALAAM GABORONE KINSHASA LISBON
LONDON LUSAKA LUXEMBOURG MAPUTO MOSCOW NAIROBI OSLO PARIS
PRETORIA ROME NATO USUN NEW YORK CAPETOWN FROM STOCKHOLM
DTD 29 APR 1976 QUOTE

S E C R E T STOCKHOLM 2369

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

DEPARTMENT PASS SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH EVALUATION OF SITUATION IN ANGOLA

REF: STATE 97817, STOCKHOLM 1752, STOCKHOLM 2316 (ALL NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. SWEDISH FACT-FINDING MISSION LEAD BY MFA
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE ANDERS THUNBORG VISITED LUANDA
AND SEVERAL NEIGHBORING AFRICAN CAPITALS APRIL 5-22.
THUNBORG HAS GIVEN CHARGE AN ACCOUNT OF HIS OBSERVATIONS
AND IMPRESSIONS. THUNBORG SEES A DANGER OF EVENTUAL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 103457 TOSEC 110413

PREDOMINANCE OF SOVIET AND CUBAN INFLUENCE OVER THE

ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT, AND THE EXISTENCE OF DIVISIONS WITHIN THE ANGOLAN LEADERSHIP. NOT SURPRISINGLY, IN VIEW OF SWEDEN'S LONG-STANDING COMMITMENT TO THE MPLA, HE GIVES STILL GREATER EMPHASIS TO THE THESIS THAT ANGOLAN CONDUCT REFLECTS TRANSITIONAL DIFFICULTIES FACED BY A NEW REGIME WITH INADEQUATE CADRES, CONFRONTING KEY POLICY DECISIONS. THUNBORG BELIEVES THE NETO GOVERNMENT WILL FOCUS ON INTERNAL REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT, AND WILL AVOID ANY EARLY MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA OVER NAMIBIA. THE SWEDES THINK BEST WAY WEST CAN ENCOURAGE ANGOLAN NON-ALIGNMENT WOULD BE VIA "HUMANITARIAN AID," BEST FORM OF WHICH MIGHT BE TRANSPORTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES SO THAT FOOD COULD BE TRANSPORTED FROM COUNTRYSIDE AND TOWNS WHERE IT IS RELATIVELY PLENTIFUL TO AREAS OF SCARCITY, NOTABLY LUANDA. END SUMMARY

2. ITINERARY. THUNBORG WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MFA OFFICIALS BO HEINEBACK, OLOV POLUHA, SVEN MALMBERG, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SWEDISH INDUSTRY (NOT IDENTIFIED BUT PROBABLY REPRESENTING PAPER MILL, TRANSPORTATION, AND MINING INTERESTS). MISSION VISITED LUANDA APRIL 5-11, LUSAKA 12-14, DAR ES SALAAM 14-18, MAPUTO 19-21, AND NAIROBI APRIL 22. THUNBORG MET WITH LEADING ANGOLAN OFFICIALS BUT NOT WITH NETO. HE HAD CHANCE MEETING WITH SENATOR PERCY IN MAPUTO.

3. ANGOLAN SITUATION. THUNBORG CHARACTERIZED ANGOLAN SITUATION AS CHAOTIC. PRINCIPAL FEATURES ARE THE LACK OF TRUCKS FOR TRANSPORTING FOOD FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE TO LUANDA, THE STAND-DOWN CONDITION OF FACTORIES DUE MAINLY TO THE DEPARTURE OF EXPERIENCED ADMINISTRATORS AND FOREMEN, AND THE LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE CADRES.

4. UNITA. THUNBORG RECITED THE USUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE MPLA AS POLITICALLY THE BEST-ORGANIZED MOVEMENT IN ANGOLA BUT COMMENTED ALSO ON THE CONSIDERABLE AND PERSISTENT STRENGTH OF UNITA, WITH ITS TRIBAL BASE. THUNBORG THINKS THAT THE MPLA GOVERNMENT COULD ACHIEVE A CONSIDERABLE MEASURE OF RECONCILIATION WITH UNITA FOLLOWERS BELOW THE SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 103457 TOSEC 110413

TOP LEADERSHIP LEVEL.

5. ARMY. THUNBORG DESCRIBED THE ANGOLAN ARMY AS THE ONLY VIABLE ADMINISTRATIVE FORCE IN THE COUNTRY. THE ARMY, HE SAID, COULD NOT POSSIBLY HAVE DEFEATED UNITA WITHOUT THE CUBANS, AND REMAINS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON THEM.

6. CUBANS. THUNBORG SEES THE CUBANS AS LIKELY TO STAY

IN ANGOLA "FOR A LONG PERIOD." HE CONSIDERS 12,500 AS THE BEST ESTIMATE FOR THE CUBAN FORCES BUT ACKNOWLEDGES THEY MIGHT TOTAL 14,000. HE HEARD THAT SOME 400 CUBANS HAVE THEIR FAMILIES WITH THEM AND THAT A CERTAIN DEGREE OF TROOP ROTATION IS BEING CARRIED OUT.

7. NAMIBIA. THUNBORG CAME AWAY FROM LUANDA PERSUADED THAT THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT WILL AVOID ANY EARLY CONFRONTATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA OVER NAMIBIA. THE ESSENTIAL REASON FOR THIS IS THE ANGOLAN PERCEPTION OF THE STRENGTH OF ORGANIZED SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY FORCES IN OR CLOSE TO NAMIBIA.

8. SOUTH AFRICA. THUNBORG REPORTED THAT THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT HAS HAD INDIRECT EXCHANGES WITH SOUTH AFRICA, THROUGH THE RUSSIANS AND THE BRITISH, FOCUSED ON THE PROTECTION OF HYDROELECTRICAL-IRRIGATION INSTALLATIONS IN THE ANGOLA-NAMIBIA BORDER REGION. THE ANGOLANS HAVE GIVEN THE SOUTH AFRICANS ASSURANCES THEY WILL RESPECT AND PROTECT THESE FACILITIES. THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE SOUGHT UNSUCCESSFULLY TO OBTAIN ANGOLAN ASSURANCES OF NON-SUPPORT TO AFRICAN GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES. WHILE AVOIDING CONFRONTATION, THE ANGOLANS CAN BE EXPECTED TO GIVE CONTINUING POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA SUPPORT TO GUERRILLAS. THUNBORG HEARD MUCH MORE TALK THAN HE HAD EXPECTED REGARDING SOUTH AFRICAN REMOVALS OF TRUCKS, TRACTORS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT (NON-SOUTH AFRICAN) FROM ANGOLA.

9. ZIMBABWE. THUNBORG RETURNS FROM ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE PERSUADED THAT FOR THE SHORT AND MIDDLE TERM, RHODESIA AND NOT NAMIBIA WILL BE THE FOCUS OF CONFLICT IN SOUTH AFRICA. UNDER OAU AUSPICES, THE GOVERNMENTS OF

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 103457 TOSEC 110413

MOZAMBIQUE, ZAMBIA AND BOTSWANA, BACKED BY THE ANGOLANS, WILL PROVIDE EVER-INCREASING ASSISTANCE TO ANTI-SMITH GUERRILLAS. DESPITE THE EMPHASIS ON GUERRILLA WARFARE, BLACK NATIONALISTS STAND READY TO RESPOND TO ANY OVERTURES FROM SMITH, SAID THUNBORG.

10. INTERNAL DIVISIONS. THUNBORG CREDITED NETO, OPO DE NASCIMENTO AND OTHER ANGOLAN LEADERS WITH A DESIRE TO PUT ANGOLA ON A "MIDDLE" OR NON-ALIGNED COURSE. THUNBORG SAID THAT NETO ALLUDED IN A RECENT SPEECH TO DIVISIONS WITHIN THE MPLA. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION, THUNBORG SAID THAT NITO ALVES INDEED SEEMS TO BE "A MAN OF THE LEFT."

11. OTHER EXTERNAL RELATIONS. IN HIS ACCOUNT, THUNBORG

MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. ZAIRE. THE NETO-MOBUTU MEETING RELAXED TENSIONS BUT THE ANGOLANS STILL MISTRUST MOBUTU.

B. ZAMBIA. GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS MADE IT NATURAL FOR ZAMBIA TO SUPPORT SAVIMBI, BUT RELATIONS ARE NOW "ON TRACK." ONE OF KUANDA'S PRINCIPAL ADVISERS WAS IN LUANDA WHEN THE SWEDES WERE.

C. NIGERIA, YUGOSLAVIA AND ALGERIA. THE PRESENCE OF THESE COUNTRIES IS CONSPICUOUS IN LUANDA. YUGOSLAVIA IS POLITICALLY IN AN EXCELLENT POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE ANGOLANS. THUNBORG HEARD THAT THERE ARE SOME 40 TO 50 ALGERIAN DOCTORS IN ANGOLA.

D. FRANCE. THUNBORG WAS INFORMED IN LUANDA THAT FRANCE IS CONSPICUOUSLY ANXIOUS TO ESTABLISH A DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC FOOTING IN ANGOLA BUT THAT THE ANGOLANS CONSIDER THE FRENCH "TOO OPPORTUNISTIC."

E. U.S. THE SWEDES ENCOUNTERED AMERICANS IN LUANDA AND UNDERSTOOD SOME WERE THERE TO TRAIN PILOTS FOR TWO BOEING AIRCRAFT.

12. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS. THUNBORG HAD THE IMPRESSION THERE WERE MANY EUROPEAN BUSINESSMEN OR TRADE REPRESENTATIVES IN ANGOLA, INTENT ON FUTURE INVOLVEMENT IN EXPLOITATION OF ANGOLA'S "SLUMBERING RESOURCES." THE SWEDES THINK THAT THE ANGOLANS ARE ANXIOUS TO RENEGOTIATE EXPLOITATION CONTRACTS IN SUCH FIELDS AS OIL AND DIAMONDS IN ORDER
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 103457 TOSEC 110413

TO GIVE ANGOLA A MORE EQUITABLE SHARE OF PROFITS.

13. DIPLOMATIC ESTABLISHMENT. THE SWEDES WERE GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT FEELS ITS ADMINISTRATION IS STILL UNABLE TO COPE WITH PROBLEMS OF ACCEPTING FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC ESTABLISHMENTS. THE GOS PLANS TEMPORARY COVERAGE FROM THE SWEDISH EMBASSY IN LUSAKA, NOTABLY BY EMBASSY SECRETARY BO ANDERS BJURNER. WHEN OTHER FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE, IT APPEARS THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF FINE HOUSING IN THE FORM OF VILLAS LEFT BEHIND BY PORTUGUESE OWNERS.

14. COMMENT: THE SUMMARY ABOVE REPRESENTS INFORMATION AND COMMENTS VOLUNTEERED BY THUNBORG WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE POINT ABOUT NITO ALVES, I.E. HIS PRESENTATION WAS NOT SHAPED OR INFLUENCED BY QUESTIONS FROM ME. HE DID

NOT VOLUNTEER COMMENT ABOUT HOW SWEDEN INTENDS TO BE HELPFUL, BUT IMPLIED PROBABLE HELP WITH RESPECT TO A PAPER MILL, TRANSPORTATION, AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES. WE EXPECT FURTHER COMMENT FROM

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SWEDISH MISSION AND FROM OTHER MFA
OFFICIALS.
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